

REMARKS

In the Office Action,¹ the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5-9, and 11-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over JP 2002-175224 to Shirakawa ("Shirakawa") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003-0126243 to Kudo et al. ("Kudo").

Applicant amends claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 13, 16, and 21. Claims 1-3, 5-9, and 11-21 remain pending in the application.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-9, and 11-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Shirakawa in view of Kudo.

Amended independent claim 1 recites a system comprising, among other features:

means for determining whether the device on the home network requests to be registered on the first home network, to be transferred media content on the first home network, or to be issued a license on the first home network allowing the device to use the media content;

local environment management means for causing the means for connecting/disconnecting to disconnect the first home network from the external network in response to a determination that the device on the first home network requests to be registered on the first home network, to be transferred media content on the first home network, or to be issued a license on the first home network allowing the device to use the media content

(emphases added). Shirakawa and Kudo, taken alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest at least the claimed means for determining and means for causing the disconnection.

¹ The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicant declines to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

Shirakawa discloses a network connection system that disconnects a local network from an external network to “prevent computers connected to an internal network from an illegal access from an external network.” ¶ 8. Specifically, in Shirakawa, if a firewall generates an alarm indicating that “there is an illegal access to the . . . internal network from the . . . external network . . . the control means can set the . . . switching means to a substantial cut-off state” ¶ 15.

In other words, Shirakawa disconnects the local network from the external network if a computer in the external network attempts to access the local network without authorization. In contrast, independent claim 1 recites, “determining whether the device on the first home network requests to be registered on the first home network, to be transferred media content on the first home network, or to be issued a license on the first home network allowing the device to use the media content,” and “disconnect[ing] the first home network from the external network in response to a determination that the device on the first home network requests to be registered on the first home network, to be transferred media content on the first home network, or to be issued a license on the first home network allowing the device to use the media content.”

Kudo fails to remedy the deficiencies of Shirakawa. Kudo discloses, “a method for connecting a new network device to a network.” ¶ 1. In Kudo, “[t]he decision of permission block 4 receives a network connection request from a new network device . . . and displays the connection request message of the new device on the displaying block 7 to notify the user of the request A response receiving block 10 receives

responses from the network devices . . . [regarding the] user's acknowledgement.”

¶ 18. Then, “[t]he decision of permission block 4 . . . determines whether to permit the connection of the new network device according to the result received from the response receiving block 10.” ¶ 18.

In other words, Kudo discloses a system whereby a user determines whether to permit or deny an external device access to the network. In contrast, independent claim 1 recites, “determining whether the device on the first home network requests to be registered on the first home network, to be transferred media content on the first home network, or to be issued a license on the first home network allowing the device to use the media content,” and “disconnect[ing] the first home network from the external network in response to a determination that the device on the first home network requests to be registered on the first home network, to be transferred media content on the first home network, or to be issued a license on the first home network allowing the device to use the media content.”

For the above reasons, Applicant respectfully requests the allowance of claim 1. Amended independent claims 7, 13, 16, and 21, though of different scope than claim 1, are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, and 17-20 depend from one of the independent claims, and are therefore allowable at least because of their dependence.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would be useful in resolving any outstanding issues, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at 202.216.5118.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to Deposit Account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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